(c) if so, what are the reasons for the same; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken to redress their grievances?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY : (a) to (d) Representation regarding grievances of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society in Andhra Pradesh were received through Hon'ble Members of Parliament and after due consideration suitable replies were also sent to the concerned persons. The issue was about providing of debt relief to the members of Krishnaraopeta Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society, Polavaram, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh under the Agricultural and Rural Debt Relief, (ARDR) Scheme. 1990. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) have reported that members of the Krishnaraopet PACS were not eligible for debt relief under the ARDR Scheme, 1990 as there was no annewari declaration available for the members of this Society for two bad crop years. However, Andhra Bank has reported that all eligible borrowers in whose case the concept of Annewari does not apply, were provided debt relief by the implementing agencies including Cooperative Banks. The District Cooperative Central Bank, Eluru conducted a pre-audit to check the correctness of the assessment of eligibility before the relief was passed on to the beneficiaries.

Import of Consumer Goods

3340. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has expressed its serious concern over the persistence of inflationary pressure during the current year;

(b) whether the prices of primary articles of mass consumption like cereals and pulses, edible oils, eggs, fish, meat and textile etc. have risen steeply;

(c) whether Government have any proposal to import edible oils, pulses and other consumer items to bring down their prices and to make them available freely to the public;

(d) if so, the salient reasons for the persistence of inflationary pressure, sharp rise in the prices of primary articles and the import of consumers goods; and

(e) whether the consumers at large have been benefited by the duty-free imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) Yes Sir, the thrust of the latest lean season credit policy announced by RBI on 17th April, 1995 is directed towards containing the inflationary pressures.

(b) Whereas the rise in the wholesale prices of foodgrains during 1994-95 was lower than the general inflation rate, it was much higher in case of edible oils, eggs, fish and meat, milk and textiles.

(c) Yes Sir, the Government has already liberalised import of edible oils, pulses and skimmed milk powder allowing their import under OGL at nil or reduced duty rates.

(d) and (e) The renewal of inflationary pressure in the financial year 1994-95 was due to the high growth of money supply as well as production/supply short-fall in some of the primary commodities such as cotton, jute, pulses sugar and edible oils. The import of nearly 10 lakh tonnes of sugar in 1994-95 on PDS account helped in reducing sugar prices. Similarly import of edible oils on reduced duty of 20 per cent on PDS account helped in containing edible oil prices.